ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

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Presented By	Colette Black, Director of People Services		
Subject	Assurance Review – People Strategy Action Plan (PSAP) 2020-24		
Type of Report	Information		
Action Point No.		For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board are asked to note the review's conclusion that assurance **has** been provided that delivery of the People Strategy Action Plan (PSAP) has achieved the strategic objectives (compliance with the 'We Will' statements) of the People Strategy.

The next steps are : -

1. Ensure that the interim PSAP is either output driven or has measurable objectives.

2. Head of Governance & Assurance to conduct a 'BAU Vs Change' Assessment against interim PSAP to determine what activity, if any, should have Portfolio Management Board (PMB) oversight and therefore adhere to PMB standard governance protocols.

3. Notwithstanding the action above, consider initiating the Closure of the current People Programme at the end of its reporting period, acknowledging that the Operational Training Project will continue as a stand-alone project.

4. Ensure new People Strategy and accompanying PSAP has a 'BAU Vs Change' Assessment to ensure that its governance and reporting is proportionate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to analyse and assess the effectiveness of the PSAP delivery and provide an assessment as to whether the strategic objectives detailed within the People Strategy have been achieved.

In accordance with the Service Assurance Strategy, the PSAP Assurance activity has adopted the 'three lines of defence' model ensuring consistent approach with other activities that form part of the Service's Assurance Framework. In relation to this report, those three lines of defence are further defined below;-

- Output Lens - Targets met/not met in the pursuant of the 26 Goals detailed within the PSAP (detailed in Appendix B)
- Outcome Lens – Compliance with the 'We Will' Statements published as part of the People Strategy 2020-24 (detailed in Appendix C)
- Embedded Value Lens – Direct analysis of the Staff Survey response data from 2018 (benchmark data), 2020, and 2022. With the commitment to further analyse the 2024 Staff Survey data planned for later this year.

Notwithstanding the Recommendations for Future Plans presented as an output of that analysis, the conclusion of this report is that broad assurance has been met in relation to the People Strategy objectives, and absolute assurance has been achieved through the identification and analysis of additional metrics. It is also acknowledged that the Service intends to conduct another Staff Survey this year, the first since the completion of the 2020-24 PSAP, this data will be analysed and provide an up-to-date assurance assessment of the embedded change as a result of the delivery of the 2020-24 PSAP.

It should be noted that many of the Goals identified as part of the PSAP will endure and remain part of any on-going people centred strategy. Therefore, whilst this report identifies that the PSAP has met many of its Goals, it should be understood that this only implies we have met our targets set for the 2020-24 reporting period; many of these goals will now be re-baselined as we strive to seek continuous improvement in these areas e.g. Promote strong positive values through every level of our service, making sure they are at the centre of what we do and how we do it.

BACKGROUND

The People Strategy Action Plan (PSAP) was designed as the delivery response to the People Strategy 2020-24. The strategy identified six distinct areas of focus, latterly referred to as Pillars, each with a set of 'We Will' statements that would afford the opportunity to evaluate the Service response at the end of the strategy period.

Following a review of the PSAP in October 2021, the PSAP activity was organised into a set of Goals, with underlying Objectives achieved through a set of Deliverables. A subsequent paper was submitted and approved by Performance & Resources (P&R) Board (28 July 2022) which recommended that oversight of the PSAP be transferred to the Portfolio Management Board (PMB), thereby enabling its governance and reporting to be consistent with all other Change within the Portfolio. As a result, the following change documentation was prepared by the appointed programme manager and submitted to PMB for approval:-

- People Programme Mandate, approved by PMB 16 August 2022
- People Programme Brief, approved by PMB 27 September 2022
- People Programme Definition Document (PDD), approved by PMB 31 January 2023

The Programme Manager began reporting the PSAP progress, by means of a dashboard and Benefits and Risks Registers to PSB, and through Highlight Reporting to PMB from October 2022.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

As previously stated, the People Strategy identified six areas of focus, and these were represented within the PSAP in the form of Pillars. Those being:-

- Culture, Involved & Valued
- Fair, Kind & Inclusive
- Wellbeing & Health
- Resourcing & Talent
- Leadership & Development
- Operational Training

The People Strategy identified a total of 91 'We Will' statements designed to provide a means to measure the effectiveness of the PSAP delivery. It further identified a number of measures within the Staff Survey which, if met, would serve as further positive indicators that the People Strategy had been delivered successfully. These are reflected on page 21 of the Strategy.

Additionally, the review of the PSAP (October 2021) identified 26 Goals across the six Pillars, each with a set of tasks (Deliverables) that once complete should mean that the Goal has been achieved. The PSAP has continued to report progress towards the achievement of these Goals since. The live dashboard is presented through the People Strategy Board.

In conducting this review, it has become clear that the original 'We Will' statements together with the Staff Survey results provide a more measurable metric than the Goals. Therefore, although this report will detail the progression of the PSAP in pursuit of its Goals, this should be taken as an indicator of PSAP delivery output. Whereas the evidence provided against each 'We Will' statement can be used as an indicator of outcome (value added) through the PSAP delivery, with the Staff Survey results providing further validation that the positive change has become embedded within the Service.

This document will focus on the Staff Survey data as its primary evidence source in determining whether the strategy's key objectives have been achieved or not. However, as significant additional evidence exists in the analysis of both the 'We Will' statements and the progression of the PSAP Goals, this analysis is provided within the appendix for transparency.

PSAP ASSURANCE (STAFF SURVEY)

Element (Pillar)	Aim	Measures	Assurance Review Comment
Culture: Involved and valued	We have a positive, modern, forward-looking, and innovative culture that anticipates and meets the changing needs of communities in Essex	Staff survey – There is an increase in our employee engagement index, as shown in our employee survey. Staff survey – There is an increase in positive responses to the statements: 1) 'I feel valued and recognised for the work that I do by senior managers' 2) 'In the last week, I have received thanks or praise for doing good work'	Our employee index has remained static between 2020 and 2022 at 82% engagement. The last staff survey took place whilst some staff were being balloted for potential industrial action relating to a national pay dispute. Staff survey- 1) Up 1% from 2018 and down 10% from 2022 2) Up 5% from 2018 and static from 2022 It can be inferred that during the pandemic employees felt very valued and protected and financially secure due to the measures the service put into place, and therefore the responses were more positive in 2020. Additional Measures now incorporated (17/1/23): There has been a real cultural shift in the service, and we've been moving in a positive direction since the first staff survey back in 2018. Recognition has been given additional focus. Our Special Performance Rewards Scheme is about recognising and valuing our people who have gone above and beyond in their day-to-day work to bring our Service values to life. The awards recognise individuals or teams who have made a significant or outstanding contribution and are judged by colleagues from both operational and support areas of our Service. Some of the service wide initiatives we have in place are Recognition Awards, ThankyouThursdays, Departmental Awards and initiatives. We have developed a joint JNCC for the majority of representative bodies that works together to improve the speed and success of negotiations and consultations. The number of JNCC has decreased from 4 to 2. Since the Working Well Together Approach was introduced in 2021-22 there have been a total of 42 people policies agreed and launched: 2021-22: 19 2022-23: 17 2023-24: 6 (up to Q3) All policies since our Service adopted the Core Code of Ethics in January 2022, have had our values considered as part of all People Policy revision or creation. We run a Code of Ethics training for all our colleagues in the Service. 93% of employees have completed the training. We undertake Deep Dives where we believe it's necessary to delve further into cases and complete case learnings as a team. We seek feedback from employees and line managers in formal cases (excluding attendance related). A review of Culture and Behaviours was undertaken as part of the approved 2023/24 audit plan and provided management reasonable assurance that the Service has systems and processes in place to ensure that ethical behaviours are understood and followed across the Service. HMICFRS Report findings on culture: The findings note that we are on a continuous positive journey. We've made significant progress since September 2021 and that we have well-defined values, which we communicate well. Values are displayed prominently throughout the service, included in key policies and we have incorporated the Core Code of Ethics with a mandatory training for all employees.

			Feedback from employees spoke of the progress that service leaders have made to improve the culture. Principal officers act as role models and consistently show commitment to the service values through their behaviours.
Fair, kind and inclusive workplace	Our employees are treated fairly and inclusively and with kindness, equality, dignity and respect.	Staff survey – There is an increase in positive responses to the statements: 1) 'Bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated at ECFRS' 2) 'I feel ECFRS treats people fairly, regardless of ethnic background, gender (including transgender), religion, sexuality, disability, pregnancy or age' 3) 'ECFRS promotes a culture of openness and transparency' We have improved diversity within our workforce, measured through self-classification data. This diversity will become more representative of the community we serve.	Having a diverse workforce brings together individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches. Staff survey- 1) Up 18% from 2018 and a further 2% increase since 2020. 2) Up 49% from 2018 and a further 4% since 2020. 3) Up 20% from 2018 static for 2020 Additional Measures now incorporated (17/1/23): We have improved our data recording and monitoring for all stages of selection and employee lifecycle to inform action. Regular reviews on Positive Action in recruitment, include independent assessments via AFSA, HMICFRS Inspection and Inclusive Employers Standard. The Inclusive Employer's Standard (IES) is the evidence-based workplace accreditation tool for inclusion and diversity. We received a Standard Submission – Bronze Accreditation in 2022. We submitted second submission in December 2023, outcome will be shared in March 2024. The number of grievances has increased from 6 in Financial Year 22/23 to 21 YTD Financial Year 23/24. It can be inferred that employees believe it is a safe space to put grievances in and they aren't likely to accept unacceptable behaviour. The collaborative partnership between line managers and People Partners is working well. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. It provides employees with multiple channels through which to speak up and raise concerns, particularly SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline. A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched. 62 Diversity and Inclusion Advocates were trained (all in 2023). They are invited to sit in on interviews panels to help ensure that the interview process is fair and unbiased. They can recognize and mitigate unconscious biases that may affect hiring decisions, thereby promoting equity and diversity within the service. They've helped to bring unique insight to the process. The soon to launch exit interview process where HR Support and On Call Liaison Officers will support and offer virtual/face to face exit interviews, added functionality to Power BI dashboard(s) that will allow us to calculate the Exit Interview response rate and both Quantitative and Qualitative data to inform decision making.
Wellbeing, safety and health	We have a safe workforce and support health, safety and wellbeing.	We have measured our levels of sickness absence, and these have decreased.	We have a monthly report where we present a detailed report on sickness levels within the service. Our target is at 5% and we have successfully managed the company wide sickness levels. 2020- 21- 7.3% 2021- 22- 7.8% 2022- 23- 6.6% 2023-24- 6.7% We have been working collaboratively with Occupational Health (OH) to triage and prioritise the service offerings like counselling, physiotherapy in the most effective way. The People Partnering team and OH have been focusing on absences and how we can expedite the return-to-work process. We offer Health screenings, Mental Health First Aider Programme (MHFA), Menopause Guidance, Wellbeing Wednesdays.

			Fitness team records are now available on Directorate pack and dashboards, and we have improved visibility of fitness testing date.

We are proud to have one of our fitness team members create first of its kind research into firefighter specific fitness requirements. His PhD dissertation contains pathways and assessment guidance on fitness standards for firefighters returning to work after musculoskeletal injuries.

The No Time to Lose (NTTL) campaign aims to get carcinogenic exposure issues more widely understood. The Service has signed up to the IOSH pledge and a working group is progressing this work.

HMICFRS Report findings on mental and physical health and wellbeing:
The report has positively indicated that we continue to have well-understood and effective well-being policies in place, which are available to all employees. A wide range of well-being support is available to support both physical and mental health with a range of offers:
• trauma risk management following significant incidents;
• an occupational health service;
• counselling and therapies;
• mental health first aid courses;
• fitness testing; and
• medicals and health screening.

Our wellbeing offerings were praised and their conversations with employees showed that our people understood and have confidence in the well-being support processes available. Of the respondents to their survey, 89 percent (237 out of 266) told them that they can access services to support their mental well-being and 87% felt their personal safety and welfare were treated seriously at work.

It was found that managers understood the welfare arrangements for employees and could implement these when needed. 35% of respondents said that they discuss their personal well-being and/or work-related stress with their manager weekly. 21% discuss it monthly, 10% quarterly and 14% annually. |
| Resourcing | We deal with resourcing challenges in critical areas to make sure our service is staffed efficiently. | We have good workforce planning, measured by a reduction in:
1) the rate of vacancies; and
2) the number of temporary promotions. | Additional Measures now incorporated (17/1/23):

We have clear guidance and practice in place to undertake workforce planning. The Service's Strategic Workforce Plan forecasts required recruitment, anticipating turnover by role, enabling us to plan recruitment and promotion processes to ensure the shortest gap between employees leaving and new hires starting.

The Service's Strategic Workforce Plan is regularly reviewed, with six-monthly updates presented to SLT. Interim updates are provided outside of this schedule.

In addition, workforce planning is undertaken quarterly, with particular focus on anticipated retirements, at the Service's Transfers & Promotions Board to ensure operational promotion processes are run in an efficient and timely manner to reduce temporary promotions and the time to hire.

1) To this end, the rate of vacancies is measured in time to hire – from point of authorisation to recruit until the new hire starts in post (127 days in 2020; 110 days in 2022; reduced to 85 days in 2023-4), Improved time to authorise and advertise from vacancy identified (28 days reduced to 22 days)

2) We had 133 temporary promotions at the end of March 2022,127 at the end of March 2023 and 111 currently (March 2024). |

Leadership and development	We have strong and effective leadership in place.	Staff survey – There is an increase in positive responses to the statements: 1) 'Members of the leadership team provide a clear vision of the overall direction of ECFRS' 2) 'Senior managers do what they say they are going to do' 3) 'I have confidence in the future of ECFRS' 4) 'I trust the Service Leadership Team (SLT)' 5) 'I feel able to make decisions without fear of being blamed if things go wrong'	1) Up 19% from 2018 results, but down 2% from 2020. 2) Up 5% from 2018 results, but down 5% from 2020. 3) Up 11% from the 2018 results but down 3% from 2020. 4) This question was not included on 2018 survey and is static since 2020. 5) Up 10% from 2018 results, but down 2% from 2020. Additional Measures now incorporated (17/1/23): There has been a real cultural shift in the service, and we've been moving in a positive direction since the first staff survey back in 2018. SLT have been making regular station visits to meet with teams face to face. The aim is for them to visit all stations within the year. Used as a way of updating colleagues and sharing specific issues. These visits have helped build trust and the SLT have been able to answer questions as they arise and can also shed light on why certain decisions are being made. SLT cascades are shared with direct reports after every SLT meeting. The Managers Meetings take place every month where a cascade of information is shared with all managers across the service. Ask Me Anything – a 25 to 30-minute monthly livestream on Workplace where our Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive Rick Hylton is interviewed about the most topical issues and answers questions submitted by colleagues. Thematic analysis completed to more fully understand and respond to this feedback. All actions related to the thematic analysis have been completed and it is hoped this has addressed these points.
Training	We have a training plan in place which supports leadership and professional and personal development, alongside core training.	Staff survey – There is an increase in positive responses to the statements: 1) 'I have the right opportunities to learn and grow at work' 2) 'My last appraisal meeting was useful in helping me improve how I do my job and show where I'm performing well' 3) 'I have received the right development to perform my management role well'	1) Up 14% from 2018 results, but down 2% from 2020 2) Up 9% from 2018 results, but down 2% from 2020 3) Up 24% from 2018 and a further 15% increase since 2020. In order to ensure employees are more aware of the opportunities available to them, the Leadership Resourcing and Succession (LRS) team visit stations on a regular basis to provide information and presentations on the process. 77% of successful candidates for Station Manager and Group Manager process came through LRS, and 30 employees completed their Crew Manager to Watch Manager portfolio and achieved a substantive post. In 2023, 96% of colleagues had a performance appraisals per year. A Quality Assurance process provided assurance of this. We are currently in the process of rolling out a new performance appraisal system for 24-25 that will empower employees to take ownership of their performance and career development. HMICFRS Report findings on learning and development: In the survey, employees have stated that they can access a range of learning and development resources. Of the respondents 80% from across all staff groups said that they have received sufficient training, and this allows them to do their jobs effectively.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

The PSAP introduced full Risk Management in October 2022. Since that time Risks and Controls have been owned and managed. As we approach the end of the reporting period it is noted that there all residual risk is below the Service Risk Appetite. The Risk report is reported to the People Strategy Board.

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

- Make best use of our resources
- Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the service
- Promote a positive culture in the workplace

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All activity within the People Strategy that required a budget was dealt with as a separate project and managed and monitored there. There are no financial implications as a result of this PSAP Assurance Report

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Impact of the action on staff

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there are not direct implications as a result of this paper; it should be noted that the People Strategy is designed to continuously improve equality, diversity and inclusion. Where appropriate, policies, processes and practices have been fully assessed for people impact.

In relation to this decision (supporting the review's conclusion that assurance **has** been provided); we have considered whether individuals with protected *characteristics will be disadvantaged. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act*:

Race	No	Religion or belief	No
Sex	No	Gender reassignment	No
Age	No	Pregnancy & maternity	No
Disability	No	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Sexual orientation	No		

The Core Code of Ethics is incorporated throughout many actions within the People Strategy.

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Staff were engaged in creation of the People Strategy. The People Strategy Board scrutinises progress against delivery of the Strategy.

FUTURE PLANS

In acknowledgment that the next iteration of the People Strategy is due to be published in January 2025, the following future actions are identified:-

- Continue to identify metrics that may provide additional assurance that the PSAP has successfully delivered.
- Creation of an interim PSAP to cover period April to December 2024
- Assessment of that Plan to determine the extent of Change Vs BAU
- Consideration given to Closing or Extending current People Programme (informed by above action)
- Draft new People Strategy

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

Appendix A [People Strategy 2020-24](#)

Appendix B PSAP Assurance (Goals)

Each Pillar and its Goals are referenced below with a simple colour status indicator of progress against the original baseline (end of strategy period 31 March 2024); Completed in Blue, On Track in Green, Some Concern in Amber, Will not be met in Red.

Culture, Involved & Valued Pillar Goals
- Promote strong positive values through every level of our service, making sure they are at the centre of what we do and how we do it **– Target Met 16 October 2023**
- Build a culture of involvement that leads to people feeling involved and valued **– Target Met 31 December 2021**
- Continually improve our services and the processes to support our people **– Target Met 10 July 2023**
- Continue to work together well with our representative bodies **– Target Met 22 November 2022**
- Support and recognise strong and effective leadership and develop talent **– Target Met 14 August 2023**
- Listen to our people so that they feel safe and valued, and encouraged to speak up **– Target Met 16 January 2023**

Fair, Kind & Inclusive Pillar Goals
- Be an inclusive employer that values diversity; demonstrate this with achievement of next Inclusive Employers standard **– Target Met 15 December 2023**
- Undertake positive action in attraction, recruitment, retention, development and progression processes**.- Target Met 16 October 2023**
- Our services are accessible and responsive to the needs of the community **– Target Met 1 August 2023**

Wellbeing & Health Pillar Goals
- Improve and maintain the physical and psychological wellbeing of our workforce, encouraging personal responsibility for wellbeing and mental health **– Target Met 14 August 2023**
- Encourage open conversations about mental health and what support is available if you are struggling **– Target Met 12 October 2023**
- Provide good working conditions so you have a healthy work-life balance and opportunities for development **– Target Met 30 September 2022**
- Monitor physical health, mental health, and wellbeing, and encourage employees to feel confident and comfortable in reporting this **- Target Met 28 February 2023**
- Work with our partners to be able to give support around financial wellbeing **– Target Met 30 November 2021**
- Ensure our policies and approaches to wellbeing and health are consistent **– Target Met 11 January 2021**
- Work locally and nationally with partners to make sure we share and develop good practice, experience, and learning **– Target Met 30 November 2022**

Resourcing & Talent Management Pillar Goals

- We want to retain and attract the right people with the right skills that will help us improve the service and we will achieve this through first class recruitment, retention and talent programmes – **Target Met 14 February 2024**.
- We will adopt a digital first approach **– Target Met 9 January 2024**

Leadership & Development Pillar Goals

- Grow our Leadership capability **– Target Met 14 February 2023**
- Promote a people centred philosophy **– Target Met 18 May 2023**
- Protect our employees by providing mandatory and digital skills training **– Target Met 17 December 2021**

Operational Training Pillar Goals

- Ensure all firefighters have the core competency and skills required to be effective and safe **– Target Met 2 March 2023**
- Ensure our operational workforce are appropriately trained and have the required support to demonstrate competence **– On Track to meet target 29 March 2024**
- We will provide the right training, at the right place at the right time **– Target Met 1 December 2021**
- We will provide training facilities that are safe spaces and realistic training environments **– Now not expected until 29 November 2024 (Ops Training Project re-baselined)**
- We will provide training that meets the training needs of all candidates **- Target Met 31 March 2023**

Appendix C PSAP Assurance (We Will Statements)

The tables below contain each 'We Will' Statement divided into their Pillars with collated evidence of achievement provided by the Pillar Leads and compiled by the Programme's Business Change Manager (BCM).

Pillar: Culture, Involved & Valued

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will promote strong positive values through every level of our service, making sure they are at the centre of what we do and how we do it.	Our Service Values are an important pillar of our Service culture and are very visible in every aspect of our communication. Values act as a compass, guiding employees' behaviours and decisions. When individuals understand and internalise the service values, they are more likely to act in ways that align with those values, leading to consistency and coherence in actions across the service. We champion values-based recruitment where our company values are visible to candidates right at the onset. All new recruits are aware of our values through training and induction. They are interwoven into our people policies and processes guiding people to make the right decisions. Our Corporate Communications team share information through our newsletters (e.g.: The Shout and Inclusion Insights) screens, posters at all stations and sites, people stories on intranet and Workplace. We also display banners and include in programmes at our events. Our Special Performance Rewards Scheme is about recognising and valuing our people who have gone above and beyond in their day-to-day work to bring our Service values to life. The awards recognise individuals or teams who have made a significant or outstanding contribution and are judged by colleagues from both operational and support areas of our Service. All policies since our Service adopted the Core Code of Ethics in January 2022, we have had our values considered as part of all People Policy revision or creation. We run a Code of Ethics training for all our colleagues in the Service.	A review of Culture and Behaviours was undertaken as part of the approved 2023/24 audit plan and provided management reasonable assurance that the Service has systems and processes in place to ensure that ethical behaviours are understood and followed across the Service. Colleagues at all levels and duty systems have been recruited and promoted with our values and leadership behaviours as key criteria since 2021. All firefighter interviews are based on values and code of ethics. All other interviews are based on NFCC leadership framework, values and code of ethics. Completion rate of 93% for the Code of Ethics training. This was received positively in the recent HMICFRS Inspection. The Shout is read by an average of 775 colleagues (55%) each week.	Yes
We will recognise our colleagues who make our service better – whether that's through the job they do or the way they show their commitment to living up to our values.	A culture of recognition develops engaged and loyal employees. At ECFRS we celebrate the big wins and all the smaller successes too and our culture of recognition has encouraged more teams to roll out departmental initiatives. Some of the service wide initiatives we have in place are Recognition Awards, ThankyouThursdays, Departmental Awards and initiatives.	Our Special Performance Rewards Scheme have been in place since 2017. Annual People Awards have been in place since 2017. ThankyouThursdays posts on Workplace for the last four years and each post is viewed an average of 150 times. These are often shared in our weekly newsletter, The Shout.	Yes

We will encourage two-way engagement and make sure all communication is swift, open and transparent.	The top priority for building engagement is to be transparent and give employees the information they need to do their jobs successfully. We've created various channels to ensure employees are well informed and aware of where to find additional resources. We offer opportunities for employees to have a voice and encourage dialogue. Some of the initiatives we have in place are: Ask me Anything (Rick), workplace forums, surveys, departmental catchups for feedback after SLT meetings to cascade information, and The Shout.	The Shout is read by an average of 775 colleagues (55%) each week. Ask Me Anything – a 25 to 30-minute monthly livestream on Workplace where our Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive Rick Hylton is interviewed about the most topical issues and answers questions submitted by colleagues. It is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month.	Yes
We will continually improve our services and the processes which support them.	We've taken the time to map our processes and look at where we can create efficiencies. Our focus is on ensuring resources are allocated to their best productive use. We have a Productivity and Efficiency board that monitors new ways of working, we've significantly improved the movements and promotions process for employees and the HR Support team, We utilise Performance data via dashboards to constantly monitor and identify areas of efficiency. We solicit and apply customer feedback to create new initiatives and amend existing processes. HR Support team- Civica improvements and updates such as SSO (Single Sign On), bespoke guidance notes for managers attached to policy have been introduced as part of our process improvements.	MAP Forms- 2.9 days saved per FTE per month (based on 4.49 FTE headcount) and 100% completion of forms sent to HR Support. Reduction in requests for information as people are able to self-serve via the dashboards. Reports no longer need to be run from Civica and there's consistency in the version everyone is using as a single source of truth.	Yes
We will support managers to motivate you and manage your performance.	High Performing Teams training, coaching, and mentoring, process built around performance appraisals with timely reminders for managers to have their discussions. Feedback received from the last HMICFRS inspection highlighted the need for us to revamp our current performance appraisal process and invest in a system that is role-appropriate and reportable. We have signed off on a new project that looks to improve appraisal process and experience in 24-25. Effective performance management is essential to us as a Service. Through both formal and informal processes, it helps us align their employees, resources, and systems to meet our strategic objectives. It works as a dashboard too, providing an early warning of potential problems.	52 colleagues have been trained on High Performing Teams. In 2023, 96% of colleagues had a performance appraisals per year. A Quality Assurance process confirmed the effectiveness of the process. Performance management cases since 2020: | Category	Performan Management		
Count of Year	Case Statu		
Year	Formal	Informal	Grand Total
2020	1	7	8
2021	12	24	36
2022	19	4	23
2023	7		7
2024	3		3
Grand Total	42	35	77		Yes

We will reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, aiming for an inclusive workplace that uses the wide-ranging talents of our workforce.	Positive Action Plans have been in place since the beginning of the Strategy and are making a positive difference to the diversity of our workforce. Having a diverse workforce brings together individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches. The wider impact of having a workforce that reflects the communities we serve means we are better able to integrate with our communities and address their unique challenges. Examples of our activities include: Recruitment Roadshows Reviewing the profile of new recruits Gender decoded adverts Training of all assessors Balanced interview panels, including representation Focus on values and behaviours in interviews Blind sifting of applications Hosting webinars on interview skills for under-represented groups	Our Wholetime reports show an increase in the numbers of female applicants (14% of applicants, up from 11%) and BAME applicants in 2024 (9%, up from 8% in 2022, and 4% prior to 2020). Our Annual Workforce Report 2022-3 shows an increase in the number of female starters in the Service (21%, up from 16% in 2020-1) and starters of a minority ethnicity (6.4%, up from 2.8% in 2020-1).	Yes
We will support and recognise strong and effective leadership and develop talent.	Having a strong Leadership and Development Programme has several benefits. It increases employee morale and retention, improves productivity, and promotes better decision making, builds better teams and prepares for future leaders. Our Leadership and Development Programme has been improved since 2022. It is now offered on a modular basis where one need not attend modules in a particular sequence. This allows for flexibility and preference, where a module that is most applicable can be attended first. Our approach to Leadership Resourcing and Succession (LRS) will give everyone the opportunity to work towards achieving their career goals. There is a stronger link with the appraisal process, self-assessment and developing portfolios to support the assessment and selection process. There is also a clear separation between development and progression through more effective succession planning and targeted development.	360-degree feedback is offered through the Realworld group and facilitated by an external provider. The assessment and review is completed on-line, with anonymous input from reviewers. On completion a report is produced, and individual objectives are discussed in a coaching session. SLT complete the process every 3 years - The first one was in 2020 and repeated in 2023. People working through the LRS also have an opportunity to complete to help them create development goals, it informs self-awareness. To date 70 people have accessed TLQ 360.	Yes
We will make sure you feel safe and valued.	For individuals to do their best work, they must feel safe and valued. As a Service, we have a responsibility to create a culture of dignity and respect for our employees, with a main goal of removing bullying and harassment from the workplace altogether. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. As part of the programme, we introduced enhanced DBS Checks, to ensure colleagues and communities feel safe. SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline was launched, and our Safeguarding policies are regularly updated, and we run lots of communications around it to ensure people are aware.	DBS Checks- 73% of checks for current employees have been completed. In the last financial year April 23-24, 11 people have been recognised with the special performance reward scheme. In 2023, 96% of colleagues had a performance appraisals per year. A Quality Assurance process provided assurance of this process. A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched.	Yes

	Our values tie in with the recognition- team and service wide. Our Special Performance Rewards Scheme is about recognising and valuing our people who have gone above and beyond in their day-to-day work to bring our Service values to life. The awards recognise individuals or teams who have made a significant or outstanding contribution and are judged by colleagues from both operational and support areas of our Service. Performance appraisals form part of a holistic approach of managing performance. Employees who are provided with feedback, given opportunities to grow, and recognised are more likely to engage at work. We're working on improving the appraisal system.		
We will encourage you to speak up and make sure we listen to you.	The top priority for building engagement is to be transparent and give employees the information they need to do their jobs successfully. We've created various channels to ensure employees are well informed and aware of where to find additional resources. We offer opportunities for employees to have a voice and encourage dialogue. Some of the initiatives we have in place are: Ask me Anything (Rick), workplace forums, SLT station visits, Managers Briefings, surveys, and The Shout. We proactively ask for feedback during the entire employee lifecycle starting from candidate experience at the point of hiring all the way to the exit interviews.	The Shout is read by an average of 775 colleagues (55%) each week. Ask Me Anything – a 25 to 30-minute monthly livestream on Workplace where our Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive Rick Hylton is interviewed about the most topical issues and answers questions submitted by colleagues. It is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month. The soon to launch exit interview process where HR Support and On Call Liaison Officers will support and offer virtual/face to face exit interviews, added functionality to Power BI dashboard(s) that will allow us to calculate the Exit Interview response rate and both Quantitative and Qualitative data to inform decision making.	Yes
We will identify ways to make sure it is easy to get things done and that we do the basics well.	By providing the right tools and resources for employees to get the basics right, we save on time and improve efficiencies. Our intranet enables employees to quickly find relevant information and self-serve, eliminating time wasted searching through multiple systems or requesting information from colleagues. This leads to improved efficiency, faster decision-making, and reduced duplication of work. There has been a significant reduction in requests for information as people are able to self-serve via the HR Directorate pack and dashboards. Reports no longer need to be run from Civica and there's consistency in the version everyone is using as a single source of truth.	Fresh Service, Civica AL records, MAP forms, HR Directorate pack and dashboards.	Yes
We will recognise common interests and joint purposes.	Staff networks foster inclusion in several ways, by helping employees feel that they belong and are part of a community. Belonging to a network or a group also helps employees feel that they can be authentic at work and derive more meaning and purpose from the work that they do. Current Forums and Networks: • Women's Forum and Female Operational Group • Digital Accessibility Inclusion Group		Yes

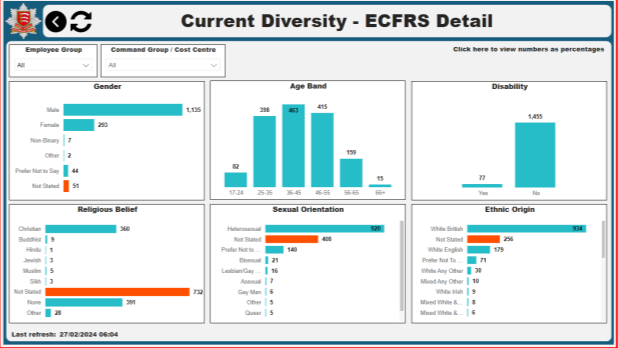|			
	• Dignity and Inclusion Advocates • Armed Forces Network • Mental Health Community Network Networks that are currently without a chair, but remain supported in our activities: • Being LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minority Forum National Networks that we engage with: • Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) • Women in the Fire Service (WFS) • National LGBTQ+ Network (Being established) Sports teams		
We will behave respectfully towards each other at all times.	Respectful behaviour fosters a positive work environment where employees feel valued, supported, and safe. This, in turn, enhances morale and motivation, leading to increased productivity and efficiency. Respect is part of our Core Code of Ethics, and an important pillar of our Service culture. It is interwoven in our ways of working, our policies and processes. It is visible in every aspect of our communication, and we aim to call it out and lead by example.	Grievances prompt us to have conversations and can shed light on issues at root level. From the 21 grievances raised YTD 23/24, 8 were raised against alleged poor behaviours. Each of these were investigated thoroughly and were followed through to resolution. Completion rate of 93% for the Code of Ethics training. A review of Culture and Behaviours was undertaken as part of the approved 2023/24 audit plan and provided management reasonable assurance that the Service has systems and processes in place to ensure that ethical behaviours are understood and followed across the Service.	Yes
We will accept the need to take part in joint consultation or negotiation with representative bodies where appropriate.	We've developed close working relationships with our rep bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption. To support this, we have a Schedule of JNCC meetings, the Working Well Together plan and policy updates.	MS Teams channels for both Joint JNCC (FOA, FRSA & UNISON) and FBU JNCC. Each hold copies of minutes of each meeting and an action log recording action items and updates.	Yes
We will set a timescale for discussion right from the start (working relationships).	We have in place the Working Well Together schedule plan. Within our policies, we've got a schedule and guidance for dates to achieve activity.	This is part of the Employee Relations Dashboard. 23/24 YTD 145 new formal cases opened with an average duration (days opened) of 63. Compared to 22/23 75 new formal cases opened with an average duration of 160 days.	Yes
We will respect the confidential nature of sensitive information.	Data protection has an impact on handling recruitment, employee record-keeping, and many other HR activities. We comply with the Service standard of gathering, storing and using data with support from our Information Governance team. We have policies in place to ensure all employees are aware. We have a GDPR training called Data Protection Essentials, which is mandatory for all staff and must be completed every 18 months.	Data privacy notice, ICT Information Security Policy Current completion rate of Data Protection Essentials is 76%	Yes

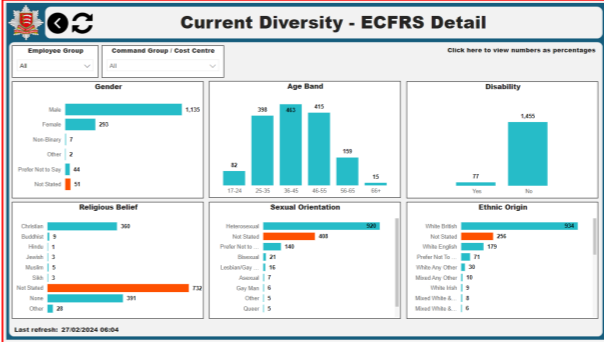|			
	While every employee can access the user interface(self-service) Access to the HR system database is curtailed to HR, Payroll, and ICT overseen by the Civica User Group as a governance in place. Key policies, contracts and JDs have confidentiality clauses included. People Partners remind colleagues/managers about confidentiality in key communications.		
We will work together to build trust and a mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities.	Building trust requires transparency, where we give our employees all the information they need to do their jobs successfully. We've created various channels to ensure employees are well informed and aware of where to find additional resources. A culture of recognition develops engaged and loyal employees. At ECFRS we celebrate the big wins and all the smaller successes too and our culture of recognition has encouraged more teams to roll out departmental initiatives. We offer opportunities for employees to have a voice and encourage dialogue. Some of the initiatives we have in place are: Ask me Anything (Rick), workplace forums, surveys, departmental catchups for feedback after SLT meetings to cascade information, and The Shout. We've developed close working relationships with our rep bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption. To support this, we have a Schedule of JNCC meetings, the Working Well Together plan and policy updates.	The Shout is read by an average of 775 colleagues (55%) each week. Our Special Performance Rewards Scheme have been in place since 2017. Annual People Awards have been in place since 2017. ThankyouThursdays posts on Workplace for the last four years and each post is viewed an average of 150 times. These are often shared in our weekly newsletter, The Shout. Ask Me Anything' is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month. MS Teams channels for both Joint JNCC (FOA, FRSA & UNISON) and FBU JNCC. Each hold copies of minutes of each meeting and an action log recording action items and updates.	Yes
We will be open, honest and transparent in our communications.	We offer opportunities for employees to have a voice and encourage dialogue. Some of the initiatives we have in place are: Ask me Anything (Rick), workplace forums, SLT station visits, Managers Briefings, surveys, departmental catchups for feedback after SLT meetings to cascade information, and The Shout. We proactively look for opportunities to gather more feedback.	'Ask Me Anything' is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month. We request for feedback through Fresh Service HR ticketing system, One Survey, Bright Ideas. The soon to launch exit interview process where HR Support and On Call Liaison Officers will support and offer virtual/face to face exit interviews, added functionality to Power BI dashboard(s) that will allow us to calculate the Exit Interview response rate and both Quantitative and Qualitative data to inform decision making.	Yes
We will make sure our service leaders are committed to our principles.	SLT have been making regular station visits to meet with teams face to face. The aim is for them to visit all stations within the year. Used as a way of updating colleagues and sharing specific issues. These visits have	SLT Cascades and SLT deep dives including a thematic review on One Survey. Thematic analysis was completed to more fully understand and respond to the feedback. All actions related to the	Yes

	helped build trust and the SLT have been able to answer questions as they arise and can also shed light on why certain decisions are being made.

SLT cascades are shared with direct reports after every SLT meeting.

The Managers Meetings take place every month where a cascade of information is shared with all managers across the service.

Ask Me Anything – a 25 to 30-minute monthly livestream on Workplace where our Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive Rick Hylton is interviewed about the most topical issues and answers questions submitted by colleagues. | thematic analysis have been completed and it is hoped this has addressed these points.

Managers Briefings and the cascades are shared after every meeting via The Shout and managers are asked to share these updates with their teams. On an average, 75 managers attend the face-to-face meeting.

'Ask Me Anything' is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month. | |
| We will be positive and constructive when working with representative bodies. | We've developed close working relationships with our representative (rep) bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation, and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption.

To support this, we have a Schedule of JNCC meetings, the Working Well Together plan and policy updates. | MS Teams channels for both Joint JNCC (FOA, FRSA & UNISON) and FBU JNCC. Each hold copies of minutes of each meeting and an action log recording action items and updates. | Yes |
| We will commit to early discussion of emerging issues and 'keep talking' so there are no surprises. | Building trust requires transparency, where we give our employees all the information they need to do their jobs successfully. We've created various channels to ensure employees are well informed and aware of where to find additional resources.

The Managers Meetings take place every month where a cascade of information is shared with all managers across the service.

We offer opportunities for employees to have a voice and encourage dialogue. Some of the initiatives we have in place are: Ask me Anything (Rick), workplace forums, surveys, departmental catchups for feedback after SLT meetings to cascade information, and The Shout.

We've developed close working relationships with our rep bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption.
To support this, we have a Schedule of JNCC meetings, the Working Well Together plan and policy updates. | Managers Briefing cascade shared after every meeting via The Shout and managers are asked to share these updates with their teams. On an average, 75 managers attend the face-to-face meeting.

'Ask Me Anything' is watched by an average of 254 colleagues every month.

MS Teams channels for both Joint JNCC (FOA, FRSA & UNISON) and FBU JNCC. Each hold copies of minutes of each meeting and an action log recording action items and updates. | Yes |
| We will aim for successful outcomes following consultations and negotiations. | We've developed close working relationships with our rep bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption. | MS Teams channels for both Joint JNCC (FOA, FRSA & UNISON) and FBU JNCC. Each hold copies of minutes of each meeting and an action log recording action items and updates. | Yes |

	We don't have industrial action and escalations. Agreement is reached in a timely manner (pace of reaching agreement)		
If appropriate, we will aim to agree a joint position between our service and the representative body.	We've developed close working relationships with our rep bodies to work effectively with them to facilitate better outcomes. Effective processes for information, consultation and negotiation, together with an honest approach and an understanding that there will be differences in opinion on occasions, can help to minimise the risk of disruption. We don't have industrial action and escalations. Agreement is reached in a timely manner (pace of reaching agreement).	Potential pay dispute in 2022 is a good example. We were on the same page looking after our people. We've learned from our previous experience and worked in partnership toward a common cause.	Yes

Pillar: Fair, Kind & Inclusive

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will inform and educate you so that you are able to respond well to neurological difference, such as dyslexia and autism, you understand diversity and inclusion, and you can challenge inappropriate language and behaviour	Attracting a diverse workforce, including people with unique skills and talents is a key component of our success. Diverse workforces have been shown to increase innovation, productivity and profitability. What we have in place: • Neurodiversity awareness, information and training provided through multiple channels. • NFCC Neurodiversity toolkit introduced • Neurodiversity Hub created on Intranet • Neurodiversity information provided in recruitment encouraging sharing of neurodivergence by Joiners • Neurodiversity is covered in inputs to new recruits • Inclusion Insights delivered to every employee monthly • Learning Events for International Women's Day, International Men's Day, IDAHOBIT, Race Equality Week delivered, all events have included Intersectional themes covering a wide range of I&D topics. • Mandatory Dignity at Work, Inclusive Behaviours and Code of Ethics training • New Dignity and Inclusion Policy • Dignity and Inclusion Advocates introduced • Employee Forums • Achieved Inclusive Employers Bronze Accreditation	Annual Equality Reports The Intranet Inclusion Insights editions L&D training records Completion rate of 84% Dignity at Work was superseded in 2023 by Inclusive behaviours. Completion rate of 81% for Inclusive Behaviours. Completion rate of 93% for the Code of Ethics training.	Yes
We will take positive action so that our workforce becomes more diverse and so more representative of the communities of Essex.	Positive Action Plans have been in place since the beginning of the Strategy and are making a positive difference to the diversity of our workforce. Having a diverse workforce brings together individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches.	Our Wholetime reports show an increase in the numbers of female applicants (14% of applicants, up from 11%) and BAME applicants in 2024 (9%, up from 8%). Our Annual Workforce Report 2022-3 shows an increase in the number of female starters in the Service (21%, up from 16% in 2020-1) and starters of a minority ethnicity (6.4%, up from 2.8% in 2020-1).	Yes

	The wider impact of having a workforce that reflects the communities we serve means we are better able to integrate with our communities and address their unique challenges. Examples of our activities include: Recruitment Roadshows Profiles of new recruits Gender decoded adverts Training of all assessors Balanced interview panels Blind sifting of applications Hosting webinars on interview skills for under-represented groups.		
We will have clear information about workforce diversity to allow us to make evidence-based decisions.	With the Workforce Diversity Dashboard, we are able to analyse and understand the diversity of our workforce. Meaningful analysis allows us to implement targeted and focused initiatives to make a real change to our workplace culture. Our data also informs People Impact Assessments (PIA) and decision making. Our PIA practice is to maintain clear, transparent and consistent work practices through policy & practice that are clear diverse and inclusive.	The data shows us that diversity data declaration rates have improved over the duration of the Strategy. The table shows the percentage of personnel that did not declare diversity data before and after the start of the initiative – i.e. % of "not stated". An increased rate of disclosure allows us to be more confident regarding any diversity-related decision making. <table><tr><td></td><td>Dec-19</td><td>Dec-23</td></tr><tr><td>Gender</td><td>8%</td><td>3%</td></tr><tr><td>Ethnicity</td><td>45%</td><td>18%</td></tr><tr><td>Sexual Orientation</td><td>63%</td><td>27%</td></tr><tr><td>Religion</td><td>73%</td><td>40%</td></tr></table> PIAs: Live-24 Closed- 1 Under Review- 10 Actions Required- 4	Yes
We will continuously monitor, review and improve our approach to recruiting and retaining staff, so that it is accessible and supports increased diversity and inclusion.	Having a diverse workforce brings together individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches. Openness to diversity widens access to the best talent. Inclusion allows engagement with talent effectively. We have improved our data recording and monitoring for all stages of selection and employee lifecycle to inform action. Regular reviews on Positive Action in recruitment, include independent assessments via AFSA, HMICFRS Inspection and Inclusive Employers Standard. All applications on Cornerstone the new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) include an Equal Opportunities section to ensure recruitment	SLT papers and Positive Action meeting minutes and actions. Our Wholetime reports show an increase in the numbers of female applicants (14% of applicants, up from 11%) and BAME applicants in 2024 (9%, up from 8%). Our Annual Workforce Report 2022-3 shows an increase in the number of female starters in the Service (21%, up from 16% in	Yes

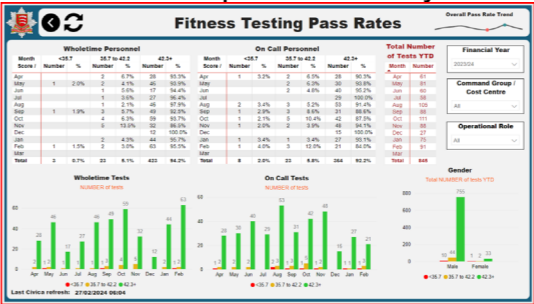|			
	arrangements are fair and effective. The confidential data will be utilised to monitor the effectiveness of our Equality and Diversity policies and practices. With the HR Dashboard, we are able to analyse and understand the diversity of our workforce. It monitors lifecycle data including exit information to inform retention activity from 2018 allowing us to map trends. Feedback from the employees is solicited via One Survey to understand any cultural concerns that may impact attraction and retention. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. It provides employees with multiple channels through which to speak up and raise concerns, particularly SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline. Enhanced DBS Checks, regular updates of policies including Safeguarding policies are part of the programme. Grievances prompt us to have conversations and can shed light on issues at root level. Grievances and disciplinaries are monitored via the dashboards, with data available starting 2019. We run a Code of Ethics training for all our colleagues in the Service.	2020-1) and starters of a minority ethnicity (6.4%, up from 2.8% in 2020-1). Thematic analysis of the OneSurvey was completed to more fully understand and respond to this feedback. All actions related to the thematic analysis have been completed and it is hoped this has addressed these points. A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched. Completion rate of 93% for the Code of Ethics training. From the 21 grievances raised YTD 23/24, 8 were raised against alleged poor behaviours. Each of these were investigated thoroughly and were followed through to resolution.	
We will review how our policies affect you.	People Impact Assessments (PIA) provide an opportunity to identify ways that we could be more inclusive in our policies, activities, projects and decision making. Our PIA practice is to maintain clear, transparent and consistent work practices through policy & practice that are clear diverse and inclusive. In addition, they are a tool to help us identify risks of discrimination or disadvantage that could occur for one or more protected groups, in order to consider the actions we can take to mitigate or remove the impact they have on people. This is done for new and existing policies. We have a Schedule of JNCC meetings, the Working Well Together plan and policy updates.	The Action Dashboard provided statistics on how many we have completed and what feedback we've received. A Power App is now available for PIAs. PIAs: Live-24 Closed- 1 Under Review- 10 Actions Required- 4	Yes
We will use external measures to assess our progress and achievement.	By providing objective evaluation, benchmarking against industry standards, and promoting accountability and transparency, accreditation serves as a cornerstone for advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives. The Inclusive Employer's Standard (IES) is the evidence-based workplace accreditation tool for inclusion and diversity.	We received a Standard Submission – Bronze Accreditation in 2022. We submitted second submission in December 2023, outcome will be shared in March 2024.	Yes

	LGA Equality Framework helps local councils to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 including the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has launched four new toolkits specifically designed to support Fire and Rescue Services in the selection, recruitment, nurturing and growth of diverse talent. HMICFRS Inspections		
We will create an environment that encourages you to speak up, be heard, and feel safe and valued.	For individuals to do their best work, they must feel safe and valued. As a Service, we have a responsibility to create a culture of dignity and respect for our employees, with a main goal of removing bullying and harassment from the workplace altogether. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. It provides employees with multiple channels through which to speak up and raise concerns, particularly SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline. Enhanced DBS Checks, regular updates of policies including Safeguarding policies are part of the programme. We also have in place: Dignity and Inclusion Policy, includes Code of Ethics • Dignity at Work, Inclusive Behaviours & Code of Ethics Mandatory training • Inclusion & Equality one of our Priorities • Values and Behaviours • Safe share introduced (Safer Together) • Dignity and Inclusion Advocates for peer-to-peer support • Employee Forums • IDAG and migration to Inclusion, Equity and Ethics Group • Inclusive Culture focus, learning from Cultural Reports • Staff Survey and related actions	People Partnering team have more visibility by attending operational command meetings, coaching managers through policy & process, upskilling our managers through the Raise the Bar on ER initiative, supporting scenario-based Hydra Training and obtaining feedback at the close of each case to support continuous learning, reflection and generate good practice. The number of grievances have increased from 6 in Financial Year 22/23 to 21 YTD Financial Year 23/24. It can be inferred that employees believe it is a safe space to put grievances in and they aren't likely to accept unacceptable behaviour. The partnership between line managers and People Partners is also working well. (add to culture). A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched. 62 Diversity and Inclusion Advocates were trained (all in 2023). They are invited to sit in on interviews panels to help ensure that the interview process is fair and unbiased. They can recognize and mitigate unconscious biases that may affect hiring decisions, thereby promoting equity and diversity within the service. They've helped to bring unique insight to the process.	Yes
We will support all staff networks to thrive so they can share their own first-hand experiences with colleagues.	Supporting staff networks within the service is essential for promoting inclusivity, supporting employee well-being, fostering professional development, enhancing communication, engaging with communities, and cultivating a positive organisational culture. Over the duration of the People Strategy, we have had varied Employee Forums, that have evolved and adapted with our progress.	Current Forums and Networks: • Women's Forum and Female Operational Group • Digital Accessibility Inclusion Group • Dignity and Inclusion Advocates • Armed Forces Network • Mental Health Community Network Networks that are currently without a chair, but remain supported in our activities: • Being LGBTQ+ • Ethnic Minority Forum National Networks that we engage with: • Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) • Women in the Fire Service (WFS) • National LGBTQ+ Network (Being established)	Yes

We will hold regular meetings of the Inclusion and Diversity Action Group, chaired by our Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive Officer.	Having the diversity and inclusion meetings chaired by our SLT sends a powerful message about the importance of these values within the service. It demonstrates that diversity and inclusion are not just buzzwords but integral to our identity and culture. These meetings take place quarterly, and The Chair changed to Director of People Services in 2022. Inclusion and Diversity Action Group changed to Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group from Q2 2023 / 24.	Meeting minute agendas can be evidenced.	Yes
We will promote and support flexible working where practical and promote different ways of working, such as mixed crewing.	Embracing different ways of working can encourage diverse perspectives and innovative solutions to challenges within the service, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Offering flexible working options can attract a wider pool of talent and help retain talented employees who might otherwise leave due to inflexible working conditions.	The Flexible Working Policy is available with a guidance for managers. As of 31 Dec 2023, 29% of all Support personnel either worked part time, compressed hours or some other non-standard working pattern. We follow a hybrid model of working, and employees are able to work flexibly from home, other stations and headquarters.	Yes
We will tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination quickly and consistently.	Addressing bullying, harassment, and discrimination helps employees feel safer, happier, and more fulfilled in their jobs. It creates an environment where they can thrive both personally and professionally. As a Service, we have a responsibility to create a culture of dignity and respect for our employees, with a main goal of removing bullying and harassment from the workplace altogether. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. It provides employees with multiple channels through which to speak up and raise concerns, particularly SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline. Enhanced DBS Checks, regular updates of policies including Safeguarding policies are part of the programme.	The number of grievances have increased from 6 in Financial Year 22/23 to 21YTD Financial Year 23/24. It can be inferred that employees believe it is a safe space to put grievances in and they aren't likely to accept unacceptable behaviour. The collaborative partnership between line managers and People Partners is working well and they attend command meetings, stations to support line managers better. A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched. The most recent HMICFRS inspection noted that the service have reviewed the effectiveness of our policies on bullying, harassment and dignity at work policy in April 2023. The new policy incorporates the Core Code of Ethics and includes reporting methods such as the new safe share scheme. It has clear definitions and sets out roles and responsibilities for all employees.	Yes
We will create a fair and accessible whistleblowing and grievance policy so you can raise concerns without fearing the consequences.	A fair and accessible whistleblowing policy is important for employees because it protects them, promotes ethical behaviour, fosters a positive work environment, maintains integrity and facilitates change. • Whistle-blowing Policy / Procedure available • Safe Share (Safer Together Model)	An agreement on the whistleblowing policy has been reached with all recognised trade unions during Phase 17. Consultation was completed and decision sheet was submitted to the PFCC 26/10/23 (policy requires PFCC approval as per PFCC constitution). Feedback provided 04/01/24, changes recirculated to rep bodies and changes made, resubmitted to PFCC 12/01/24. Pending signed decision sheet before publishing.	Yes

		A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched.	
We will involve, consult and inform you so that you understand how you can contribute to our service.	Involving, consulting, and informing employees within the service not only enhances operational effectiveness and safety but also promotes a culture of collaboration, innovation, and trust. The top priority for building engagement is to be transparent and give employees the information they need to do their jobs successfully. We've created various channels to ensure employees are well informed and aware of where to find additional resources.	• Managers Briefing and cascade • Ask Me Anything • Intranet • The Shout • Staff Survey • Pulse Surveys • Workplace • Bright Ideas • Inclusion Insights • Employee Forums • IDAG / IEEG • Values (We value the contribution of all)	Yes

Pillar: Wellbeing & Health

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will include wellbeing priorities in our service culture.	Wellbeing initiatives can enhance performance and effectiveness. When employees feel supported and valued, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work, leading to improved job performance and better outcomes during emergency situations. Our current volume of referrals and the diligent process we follow, reflect how much of a priority wellbeing is within our culture. What we have in place: Health screenings Mental Health First Aider Programme (MHFA) Menopause Guidance Wellbeing Wednesdays		Yes
We will make sure our policies and approaches to wellbeing and health are consistent.	Ensuring consistency in policies and approaches to wellbeing and health is essential for promoting fairness, transparency, trust, alignment with organisational values, and legal compliance within the service. Our Occupational Health (OH) Policies are published and updated regularly on the intranet. Our Fitness, OH and People Partnering (PP) teams work in conjunction to ensure we apply our policies consistently to absence management. Our People Partners and HR Support teams work directly with line managers to update them on policy updates. The soon to be launched Manager Toolkits (Wholetime, On Call and Support) are a valuable tool with the guidance, support, and resources they need to navigate their roles as people managers effectively, build confidence, and contribute to the success of their teams and the service.	Occupational Health (OH) and Wellbeing Intranet page was developed in 2023 and is well maintained with updated information on how to manage attendance, management referrals, and health screenings. Updates are shared at Managers Briefings, and we had service wide comms around the relaunch of absence policy.	Yes

We will work locally and nationally with partners to make sure we share and develop good practice, experience and learning	By collaborating with partners at both the local and national levels, we have been able to tap into a diverse pool of expertise, resources, and perspectives. This collaboration allows for the sharing of best practices, innovative ideas, and resources that can enhance the effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives.	Attendance at key events and meetings like AFSA provide us with a arena where we're able to share best practices and improve the way we protect and grow diverse communities. The Director of People Services is partnering with the NFCC on several projects. Our collaborative work with the Fire Fighters Charity. We are proud to have one of our fitness team members create first of its kind research into firefighter specific fitness requirements. His PhD dissertation contains pathways and assessment guidance on fitness standards for firefighters returning to work after musculoskeletal injuries.	Yes
We will continue to develop our services, which include Health and safety: Physical health.	We recently launched new a fitness policy. Our employees have access to fitness equipment and fitness advice from the fitness team. Examples of bespoke fitness exercise plans and regimes.	Fitness team records are now available on Directorate pack and dashboards. Improved visibility of fitness testing date. 	Yes
We will continue to develop our services, which include Health and safety: Mental health.	We launched a mental health first aiders programme to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to support others in times of mental health crisis or distress, ultimately promoting early intervention, reducing stigma, and enhancing overall well-being. We have in place Counselling pathways as different individuals may benefit from different types of counselling or therapeutic approaches. Counselling pathways are important because they provide tailored, specialised support, promote continuity of care, incorporate holistic approaches, empower individuals, and contribute to prevention and early intervention efforts in mental health care.	OH and Wellbeing Intranet page was developed in 2023 and is well maintained with resources on how best to support mental health for yourself or your team.	Yes
We will continue to develop our services, which include Health and safety: Physical safety.	Keeping people safe is our number one priority. Demonstrating a commitment to health and safety builds trust and confidence in the community. We use our internal comms and social media channels, local Facebook groups, press and media broadcast and our newsletters to reach our audiences, employees, and community. During the pandemic, we put in telephone hotlines and webinars to keep our people safe. A group of HR team members formed the Covid Operational	We follow the NFCC Campaign Calendar every month and use the highlighted day/week/month themes to share safety messages with our communities. Whenever possible, we use the overarching theme of the month and tailor it using our incident data and local insights to make the message more relevant and engaging to our audience. We also use our own people to deliver the messages.	Yes

	Facility (COF) where they worked collaboratively with vaccination centres to ensure our employees could get early vaccination slots. Our teams in Health and Safety (H&S) Prevention and Protection, work to ensure we are in compliance with health and safety regulations, by conducting risk assessments and safety inspections, and public awareness campaigns on fire safety and prevention measures through various channels such as social media and community events to ensure we Live, Work and Travel safely.	The No Time to Lose (NTTL) campaign aims to get carcinogenic exposure issues more widely understood. The Service has signed up to the IOSH pledge and a working group is progressing this work. HMICFRS Report findings on mental and physical health and wellbeing: The report has positively indicated that we continue to have well-understood and effective well-being policies in place, which are available to all employees. A wide range of well-being support is available to support both physical and mental health with a range of offers: • trauma risk management following significant incidents • an occupational health service • counselling and therapies • mental health first aid courses • fitness testing • medicals and health screening Our wellbeing offerings were praised and their conversations with employees showed that our people understood and have confidence in the well-being support processes available. Of the respondents to their survey, 89 percent (237 out of 266) said that they can access services to support their mental well-being and 87% felt their personal safety and welfare were treated seriously at work. It was found that managers understood the welfare arrangements for employees and could implement these when needed. 35% of respondents said that they discuss their personal well-being and/or work-related stress with their manager weekly. 21% discuss it monthly, 10% quarterly and 14% annually.	
We will continue to develop our services, which include Financial wellbeing: Flexible benefits, employee discounts, retirement planning	Financial stress can significantly impact employee morale and engagement. By offering support and resources for financial wellbeing, the fire service can help alleviate stress and create a more positive work environment. We also understand that everyone's circumstances are different and may require flexibility on the way they work. We offer: Flexibility on the hours of work, flexibility of locations i.e. stations, hybrid working, career breaks, carry forward of leave, welfare loans, hardship cases, salary advance, pension planning assistance.	What we have in place: Generous pension scheme Holiday pay Salary Finance Employee benefits page on the intranet has a list of benefits that are periodically updated Blue light card discounts Pensions team run various sessions, 'I am thinking of retiring (sharepoint.com)'	Yes
We will continue to develop our services, which include Good lifestyle: Fitness, Healthy eating.	We launched new fitness policy, access to equipment and advice, Wellbeing Wednesdays, bootcamp and other fitness opportunities. We run sessions on food and nutrition, fitness service games.	Fitness team records, dashboards, and personalised plans for employees.	Yes

	We offer freshly cooked meals to our employees at headquarters in the canteen, and teams on station cook healthy meals.		
We will continue to provide a professional occupational health service, including health screening, occupational health and medical referrals, fitness advice and support, counselling, advice and health promotions.	Both the Occupational Health and the Fitness teams have a part to play in this process by advising the employee, service managers and HR about the relationship between health and work and work and health; rehabilitation and assisting return to work in terms of physical fitness can be supported through the Fitness Advisers.		Yes
We will aim to improve and maintain the physical and psychological wellbeing of our workforce, encouraging you to take personal responsibility for your wellbeing and mental health.	Operational stress that may cause emotional trauma is a hazard like any other in the workplace and can be risk assessed. TRiM identifies colleagues at risk after traumatic events. Our Service is committed to providing support to its colleagues after they have experienced traumatic incidents and events through a process called Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) which offers peer to peer support. TRiM Practitioners have undertaken training. The No Time to Lose (NTTL) campaign aims to get carcinogenic exposure issues more widely understood. The Service has signed up to the IOSH pledge and a working group is progressing this work. The Safer Together Programme was launched in July 2023. It provides employees with multiple channels through which to speak up and raise concerns, particularly SafeShare the internal 24/7 helpline. DBS checks benefit colleagues within the fire service by promoting workplace safety and trust. Knowing that everyone on the team has been properly vetted can contribute to a supportive and positive work environment.	A total number of 54 SafeShare incidents since the programme launched. DBS Checks- 73% of checks for current employees have been completed.	Yes
We will encourage open conversations about mental health and what support is available if you are struggling.	We launched a mental health first aiders programme to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to support others in times of mental health crisis or distress, ultimately promoting early intervention, reducing stigma, and enhancing overall well-being. We have in place Counselling pathways as different individuals may benefit from different types of counselling or therapeutic approaches. Counselling pathways are important because they provide tailored, specialised support, promote continuity of care, incorporate holistic approaches, empower individuals, and contribute to prevention and early intervention efforts in mental health care. Our Forums, MHFAs, Counselling sessions provide support to employees.	OH and Wellbeing Intranet page was developed in 2023 and is well maintained with resources on how best to support mental health for yourself or your team.	Yes

We will provide good working conditions so you have a healthy work-life balance and opportunities for development.	Implementing a flexible working policy can lead to a more engaged, satisfied, and productive workforce, while also providing benefits to us in terms of recruitment, retention, and engagement. Our Flexible Working policy considers how some people might need to work different hours, work better at different times of the day or in different environments. Career breaks and sabbaticals require careful planning and consideration but retaining experienced staff members can save recruitment and training costs in the long run and attract top talent to the service.	New Ways of Working Project, use of TOIL and flexibility, ASW and options, swaps. As of 31 Dec 2023, 29% of all Support personnel either worked part time, compressed hours or some other non-standard working pattern. We follow a hybrid model of working, and employees are able to work flexibly from home, other stations and headquarters.	Yes
We will support effective line management and supervision.	Our Leadership and Development Programme has been improved since 2022. It is now offered on a modular basis where one need not attend modules in a particular sequence. This allows for flexibility and preference, where a module that is most applicable can be attended first. Our People Partners and HR Support teams work directly with line managers to update them on policy updates. The soon to be launched manager toolkits for grey and green books, a valuable tool with the guidance, support, and tools they need to navigate their roles as people managers effectively, build confidence, and contribute to the success of their teams and the service.	Feedback from One Surveys, exit interviews and ER cases, We undertake Deep Dives where we believe it's necessary to delve further into cases, and complete case learnings as a team. We seek feedback from employees and line managers in formal cases (excluding attendance related).	Yes
We will monitor your physical health, mental health and wellbeing, and encourage you to feel confident and comfortable in reporting this.	Pre-screening before hiring, medicals job based, and other tests that the OH team offer. Can be offered as part of a plan or on demand. we track Mental Health as part of the absence management. Overall wellbeing-ER cases both formal and informal, safeguarding escalation model		Yes
We will work with our partners to be able to give support around financial wellbeing.	Financial stress can significantly impact employee morale and engagement. By offering support and resources for financial wellbeing, the fire service can help alleviate stress and create a more positive work environment. We also understand that everyone's circumstances are different and may require flexibility on the way they work. We offer: Flexibility on the hours of work, flexibility of locations i.e. stations, hybrid working, career breaks, carry forward of leave, welfare loans, hardship cases, salary advance, pension planning assistance. We have built a strong partnership with the Firefighters Charity and other Local Essex partnerships.	What we have in place: Generous pension scheme Holiday pay Salary Finance Employee benefits page on the intranet has a list of benefits that are periodically updated Blue light card discounts Pensions team run various sessions, 'I am thinking of retiring (sharepoint.com)'	Yes

Pillar: Resourcing & Talent Management

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will develop workforce plans and approaches to predict demand and to attract and retain the right people with the right skills.	We've agreed with the service, PFCC and rep bodies how much grey book resource we need to meet our requirements in the IRMP/CRMP. The Strategic Workforce Plan looks at where we are going to experience loss of resource by role and allows us to predict demand and enable us to attract the right people with the right skills. The Transfers and Promotions Board meets every six weeks is utilised to monitor movements, ensure quick "plugging of gaps" in line with retirements, promotions and other movements (including secondments). This is also the forum to discuss and agree contingency plans, such as our response to the recent risk of loss of experienced personnel to London Fire Brigade) are on a needs basis.	In the course of the People Strategy, we have recruited 135 (with a further 7 in process to transfer in late Spring 2024) meaning 142 wholetime firefighter recruits vs a target of 144 from the initial Strategic Workforce Plan. The minutes of the Transfers and Promotions Board tracks and records and documents the internal movements of our workforce and allows us to ensure the right people with the right skills are at the right locations. We received 2400 applications for wholetime firefighters in the period of 2018-19 (average 1200 per annum). In the period of the People Strategy, this has increased to an average of 1,925 per year (7,700 across the 4 year period). In terms of retention, of 65 identified employees confirmed as being interested in leaving to join London Fire Brigade in 2023, in the last nine months, we have recorded only 9 leavers. We report annually on the demographic of our applicants and our joiners and use this to inform our Positive Action work. Monthly reporting takes place as part of the HR Monthly report to SLT. Recruitment dashboard is live via Power BI that track current vacancies and rolling performance metrics.	Yes
We will review and update all recruitment, resourcing, aspiring leader and pre-employment policies and practices that meet the needs of our service.	New recruitment and associated policies published Dec 2022. Transfer Policy published 2023- this was updated. whole on call recruitment was reviewed and refreshed. Ops processes for recruitment standardised CM to AM- 3 step process.	Recruitment Policy (and associated appendices for managerial guidance); Acting Up & Temporary Promotion Policy; Transfer Policy.	Yes
We will use technology and a 'digital first' approach and put applicant tracking in place to provide an efficient experience for candidates and recruiters.	New ATS launched Sep 23 for on call, Oct 23 for all other applicants. We measure candidate satisfaction (MS forms) since Jan 23 for all candidates regardless of outcome.	Since changing system, 97.5% of applicants reported that they had access to all of the information in an inclusive and accessible way to support their application and candidate experience (up from 87.5%); 72.5% of candidates reported a positive recruitment experience since switching to the recruitment portal (up from 62.5%); 89% of hiring managers reported they found the recruitment process easy to manage (up from 80%).	Yes

We will base our decisions on resourcing and managing aspiring leaders on evidence so that we can measure improvements to our service.	Improvements made to LRS (by aligning it to the recruitment process)- Jan 24. Hiring manager feedback has been incorporated.	77% of successful candidates for Station Manager and Group Manager process came through LRS, and 30 employees completed their Crew Manager to Watch Manager portfolio and achieved a substantive post.	Yes
We will identify whether we need to make, buy or reduce resources.	We brought in the Approval to Recruit (ATR) process in 2021, formalised to review all requirements for resources.		Yes
We will have in place, clear and straightforward online applications and online material for new starters.	Since changing system, 97.5% of applicants reported that they had access to all of the information in an inclusive and accessible way to support their application and candidate experience (up from 87.5%) and 72.5% of candidates reported a positive recruitment experience since switching to the recruitment portal (up from 62.5%).	ATS Website Advert templates	Yes
We will make sure our language and branding attracts candidates whose personal qualities, values and attributes match our service values.	As part of our Positive Action and Continuous Improvement Plans, our recruitment advisors underwent training on language and branding including gender decoding, external session with Inclusive Employers, and social media branding and advertising session with Casanovas Recruitment.	Candidate feedback collated during Positive Action review (2023): 100% of candidates reported that the assessment process they went through felt inclusive and encourages to apply again (sample of 27 total), 93% had all the information needed. From wider candidate feedback, 97.5% of applicants reported that they had access to all of the information in an inclusive and accessible way to support their application and candidate experience (up from 87.5%); 72.5% of candidates reported a positive recruitment experience since switching to the recruitment portal (up from 62.5%)	Yes
We will improve candidates' experience and how we recruit and retain staff.	As part of our Positive Action and Continuous Improvement Plans, our recruitment advisors underwent training on language and branding including gender decoding, external session with Inclusive Employers, and social media branding and advertising session with Casanovas Recruitment.	97.5% of applicants reported that they had access to all of the information in an inclusive and accessible way to support their application and candidate experience (up from 87.5%); 72.5% of candidates reported a positive recruitment experience since switching to the recruitment portal (up from 62.5%).	
We will be consistent in how we advertise roles.	Our Advert template and eligibility criteria has been agreed and is consistent. All roles are advertised via Recruitment Portal, as well as via NFCC, AFSA (social media), Women in Fire, via Career Transition Partnership, and Indeed.		Yes
We will continue to develop and put in place materials and methods for assessing all candidates for vacancies in an inclusive and diverse way.	Traditional assessment methods may inadvertently favour certain demographics or backgrounds, leading to systemic biases. By employing inclusive methods, you ensure a fair evaluation process for all candidates, regardless of their background or identity. We underwent Gender decoding with comms team and Inclusive Employers session for language, coaching sessions. We run People Impact Assessments, regular review between Head of Resourcing and Strategic Lead People Partners, and pre-recruitment meetings to ensure we follow a template format for our hiring managers, recruitment advisors and People Partners.		Yes

We will make sure our selection methods place values, leadership capability and technical skills at the centre of our assessment process.	We do this as part of the recruitment policy where values, leadership behaviours and technical skills are at the core of the assessment process.	Wholetime interview questions are Values & ethics based; all recruitment activities ensure leadership behaviours (NFCC Leadership Framework) are evidenced alongside Service values & Core Code of Ethics, as well as relevant technical skills.	Yes
We will regularly review our selection methods, taking into account external research and findings and how appropriate assessment methods are for each role.	Annually, and at the end of every wholetime recruitment campaign, we undertake a deep dive/lessons learned process review. Externally, we link up with 7 FRS as part of a benchmarking exercise, as well as being a lead contributor to the NFCC Recruitment Hub, including regular benchmarking with other FRS on process, assessments and positive action activities.		Yes
We will review our aspiring leader pool process, to create a clear distinction between recognised potential and people ready for the next role.	We have an appraisal process that enables us to measure high performance, we have LRS albeit it is voluntary. It has helped colleagues develop into future roles. Ready for role- we have a 4-day CM to WM development session called Hydra Training (3 days operational and 1day people management).	16 aspiring Watch Managers are developed through an intensive "Crew to Watch Manager" programme. The Service's Leadership resourcing & Succession programme identifies people with potential to progress (development pool) and those ready for the next role (resource pool). The Service's Recruitment promotion process also identifies those who are ready for role (met benchmark for selection but other candidates out-performed) and places them an equivalent resource pool.	Yes
We will design and develop internal and external 'aspiring leader pipelines', including work experience, interns, apprentices and community placements, alongside experienced internal and external candidates.	We have a Firefighter (FF) Apprenticeship Scheme (Colchester Institute). We run an internship programme in collaboration with Leonard Cheshire.	86 FF apprentices, that have all been made substantive in post. We do not have any current Green Book apprentices. The work on Succession Planning is in the pipeline.	Yes
We will give you access to a range of development activities, including internal and external secondments, shadowing and project work.	Candidates in the Resource and Development Pools receive priority access to acting up, temporary promotions, project work and other development activities. The Service offers a "Day in the Life of" opportunities. The Service offers an open and inclusive approach to working groups and assessing and interviewing firefighters' opportunities.		Yes

Pillar: Learning & Development

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will adopt the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) leadership framework and core learning pathways.	Aligning with the NFCC strengthens services by promoting consistency, collaboration, professionalism, and continuous improvement within the sector. The framework incorporates best practices and lessons learned from across the fire and rescue sector. By aligning with this framework, we've been able to gain access to these best practices, enabling us to integrate proven strategies and techniques into our programmes. Leadership framework- we have built our leadership courses, LRS and recruitment & promotions.	Core learning pathways has been running since 2020 when the L&D strategy was first launched. 8 different subjects have been made available on varying subjects. This excludes mandatory training provided on line and ILM courses and colleagues can access the courses via the intranet. 672 spaces were available with an average 55% attendance rate. Course feedback: Of those that submitted feedback after completing an L&D course in this period (176 feedback forms)- 73% were satisfied with overall course content. 76.5% were satisfied with topic relevance. 93.7% rated the trainer knowledge of the subject excellent or good.	Yes
We will offer development opportunities that link to each part of the leadership framework and core learning pathways.	Core learning pathways (ILM 3 and 5) has been running- 24 number of courses and colleagues can access the courses via the intranet. Leadership framework- we have built our leadership courses, LRS and recruitment & promotions on the framework.	A total of 37 people accessed ILM 3 – 20 people gained accreditation to date (the programme remains open for 3 years from registration) A total of 40 people accessed ILM 5 – 21 people gained accreditation to date (the programme remains open for 3yrs from registration).	Yes
We will run a programme that introduces managers to a people-centred philosophy that prioritises positive behaviours, staff motivation, involvement and accountability	Running the programme has helped to promote a supportive and effective work environment, with a goal to improve employee morale and performance, and ultimately enhance the service's ability to fulfil its mission of protecting the community. Our Leadership Programme is modular and covers 7 principles. From 2020-22, it was a full programme and modules had to be attended in sequence. Since 2022, it's become modular so you don't have to be attended in sequence where one can pick modules that apply most.	A total of 142 attended out of 250 spaces available accessed the full programme between 2020 - 2021. There were 28 sessions offering 48 (336 individual sessions) unique spaces to complete all 7 modules available from 2022 to date a total. 20 people have completed all sessions, 192 sessions have been attended.	Yes
We will include feedback on performance at all levels, so that managers are encouraged to understand and reflect on how they and others influence people around them.	1. TLQ360 feedback is available, SLT complete it every 3 years. Anyone else can request to do it. 2. As part of the leadership programme there is a full module on feedback. 3. We offer 1 hour light- touch feedback sessions 4. Have coaching & mentoring available, and anyone can select a coach/mentor	SLT completed in 2020 and repeated in 2023. To date 70 people have accessed TLQ 360. 184 people attended the leadership module on feedback. 64 people have accessed the 1 hour light touch feedback. Coaching and mentoring can be booked directly; therefore we do not record all sessions however feedback and known take up suggests that more than 40% of the Service have accessed either coaching or mentoring at least once.	Yes

		7 people gained an ILM coaching accreditation in 2023. 42 people attended a coaching and mentoring course.	
We will commission the next phase of our leadership and management development training, including feedback, coaching and focusing on solutions.	1. TLQ360 feedback is available, SLT complete it every 3 years. Anyone else can request to do it. 2. As part of the leadership programme there is a full module on feedback. 3. We offer 1 hour light- touch feedback sessions 4. Have coaching & mentoring available, and anyone can select a coach/mentor		Yes
We will explore opportunities, such as a direct-entry scheme and fast-track internal development, to deal with future leadership challenges in specific areas of our service.	Direct entry scheme at the moment we review. It's run by NFCC. Fast track internal development is LRS and Succession Planning hand in hand. Metrics are generated in the form of a grid (future managers).		Yes
We will make sure all staff have the right operational skills and competencies.	Grey book- have PDR Pro where competencies mapped, training requirements, CPD logged. Green book- captured in the appraisal process unfortunately Civica does not allow us to pull the information out in a report, but the new system allows us to pull the information out in the form of report as part of the Training Needs analysis (TNA) and build a calendar. Departmental training plans- grey and green book where line managers can specify skills training needed for their teams.		Yes
We will be open and fair when identifying, developing and supporting colleagues who have the potential to be aspiring leaders.	Through LRS and recruitment process, we have independent assessors and panels made up of different team members with a focus on inclusivity and diversity.		Yes

Pillar: Operational Training

Statement	Evidence	What Data Is Available?	Achieved?
We will develop new training programmes and review them each year to make sure they meet development needs identified through appraisals and department planning.	The nature of response constantly evolves due to changes in technology, regulations, and community demographics. Regular reviews ensure that training programs stay aligned with these evolving needs.

Our Department training plans are relevant and updated. For this year (24-25) we have cultivated more evidence-based planning for the budget. We have put together a departmental training plan based on the budget. | PFCC dashboards available | Yes |

	Based on their ranks, there is management of requalification processes.		
We will review our training plans so that we can offer essential skills to do with, for example, inclusion, diversity, behaviours, performance management, industrial relations and handling disciplinary hearings and grievances.	By incorporating these essential skills into training plans, the service demonstrates its commitment to fostering a respectful, inclusive, and equitable workplace while also equipping employees with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their roles effectively and ethically. The HR Support offer first line support when employees need information. Together with the Learning and Development team and People Partnering team, we have developed trainings that develop people management, absence management, performance management. People Partners work collaboratively with line managers to handle disciplinaries and grievances.	The Intranet has manager guidance booklets and flowcharts where needed. Face to face training offering is available 7 days a week. Group trainers also offer flexible approach to evenings and weekends for training to watches (4 trainers, one linked to each command area). Inclusive Behaviours training is being rolled as a face-to-face training.	Yes
We will gather and listen to feedback from our learners through the Learning and Development Advisory Group and other feedback methods.	Feedback helps ensure our training programmes remain aligned with the broader objectives and priorities of the service. By gathering input from learners, we can confirm that training initiatives are effectively supporting our goals and mission-critical objectives. The standardisation meetings take place quarterly.	L&D Dashboards	Yes
We will offer training that suits a variety of learning styles.	Our lesson plans take this into account to ensure our trainings suit a variety of learning styles. This is essential for maximising learning effectiveness and fostering a positive learning environment.	Lesson plans	Yes
We will use our Quality Assurance Framework and our people impact assessments to guarantee that all training across our service is inclusive and of a high quality.	The standardisation meetings take place quarterly. At the end of 2023, we recruited a new position of Quality Assurance Manager to ensure we have oversight on all elements of QAF and compliance. Our People Impact Assessments provide an opportunity to identify ways that we could be more inclusive in our trainings.	L&D Dashboards	Yes
We will explore ways of using technology more effectively so that we can offer training and development opportunities at the most suitable time.	In the course of the People Strategy, we have made several improvements: Microsoft forms rolled out QR code for feedback is now available PDR Pro can be accessed anywhere Face to face training offering is available 7 days a week Group trainers also offer flexible approach to evenings and weekends for training to watches (4 trainers, one linked to each command area).		Yes
We will support succession planning by developing people who have the potential to fill key roles.	In order to ensure employees are more aware of the opportunities available to them, the Leadership Resourcing and Succession (LRS) team visit stations on a regular basis to provide information and presentations on the process.	77% of successful candidates for Station Manager and Group Manager process came through LRS, and 30 employees completed their Crew Manager to Watch Manager portfolio and achieved a substantive post.	No

	The succession planning project will be rolled out in 2024, as HR entered Business Continuity in 2022 due to under-resourcing.		
We will review mandatory training.	The nature of response constantly evolves due to changes in technology, regulations, and community demographics. Regular reviews ensure that training programs stay aligned with these evolving needs.		Yes
We will continue to deliver the operational training plan.	We have planners for each of the areas of operational training, and we measure milestones.		Yes
We will provide our operational workforce with the appropriate training and development to support you to show that you are competent in your role.	PDR Pro has planners linked to their rank to maintain their competency.	PDR Pro dashboards	Yes
We will assess the competence of the operational workforce against the relevant standards, for example, role maps and National Occupational Standards	PDR Pro has planners linked to their rank to maintain their competency. Our trainings going forward will be aligned to the National Occupational Standards.	PDR Pro dashboards	Yes
We will verify that our training and assessment means our operational workforce is competent.	Verifying our training and assessment is essential for maintaining safety and mitigating risks, improving performance, building public confidence, and enhancing organisational resilience within the fire service. We have a mechanism to measure and monitor operational competency.	PDR Pro, Civica training records, CPD records, local station training records. SLT paper was submitted with an update on assurance of competence.	Yes
We have invested in our operational training so that we can: make sure most of our training is delivered at local stations.	We increased headcount of department to 4 trainers to follow watch-based training We've recruited number of support trainers to support delivery of operational training more locally and flexibly. This has had a very positive impact on trainings.	Civica records 29 Support trainers currently on record.	Yes
We have invested in our operational training so that we can: deliver core acquisition and specialist training centrally, with group trainers supporting local station-based training.	We increased headcount of department to 4 trainers to follow watch-based training. We've recruited number of support trainers to support delivery of operational training more locally and flexibly.	Civica records 29 Support trainers currently on record.	Yes